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ABSTRACT

This paper surveys several recent reports of innovations in teacher education programs, which are of relevance to those in the field of English. Among those discussed are the Multi-State Teacher Education Project, a study conducted by James A. Johnson which summarized responses from 385 colleges and universities, and editor Roy A. Edelfelt's categorization of 29 innovative programs. In addition, the "teacher center" concept is described, and the program of the 1977 winner of the American Association of Colleges of Teacher Education's Distinguished Achievement Award (Western Illinois University) is mentioned. Both successful and unsuccessful approaches are described, and seven general principles extracted from these reports are presented: trends indicate movement toward longer, more developmental programs; strong support for full-time teaching experience is indicated; field-based teaching is a viable technique; generally, wide experience is valuable; competent student supervision is essential; technology, especially in the form of videotape, is being exploited to a greater degree; and concern for accurate evaluation is conspicuously absent in many programs. (KS)

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New Wine for the Old Bottle: Innovations for Preparing Teachers of English*

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Any program dedicated to the subject of innovations has clearly accepted change as its basic reason for existence. This is the reason that I have made a change in the admonition of old that "new wine must be put into new bottles."¹ Times have changed in the 19 centuries since this statement was recorded by three biographers of the speech of one whom millions still regard as the greatest teacher of all time. Today we are facing the ecological problem of having so many bottles left over that soon we will have no space left for them if we don't use the old ones.

What I propose to do today is to see what kind of new wine we can put into this old bottle of preservice education that will stimulate us into producing better teachers of English.

Our first problem is to determine the dimensions of time that we should use. Obviously we are looking at the future as we are examining the present. But, we can learn much by looking at the past to determine what some of the recent innovations are and how they have worked out. If we set a time-frame of ten years, we will limit our task to reasonable proportions and thus be able to do a better job of analysis.

*A speech given at the Annual Meeting of the Conference on English Education of the National Council of Teachers of English, Knoxville, Tennessee, March 25, 1977.

¹The Gospel According to Saint Mark, King James' Version, 2:22. Compare also, St. Matthew, 9:17, and St. Luke, 9:38

The most helpful and most comprehensive study that I have found on innovations in preservice teacher education programs in the last decade was conducted as part of the Multi-State Teacher Education Project.² Dr. James A. Johnson summarized the responses from 385 colleges and universities responding among 1110 that had been queried about innovations in student teaching programs. While the query concerned student teaching, the responses included many parts of the total program of preservice education, indicating that it is very difficult to talk about one part without involving others which precede, follow, or are concomitant.

Listed below are the 15 categories into which I tried to include 387 (81%) of the 475 innovations reported. For example, 56 schools reported using TV equipment with student teachers as an innovation, which was 14.5% of the total of 385. In fairness to Dr. Johnson, I must caution the reader that the following tabulation was performed according to my classification and not his.

<u>Innovation</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>Percent</u>
1. Use TV equipment with student teachers	56	14.5
2. Provide unusual or extensive pre-student teaching laboratory experience	54	14
3. Schedule a professional semester	49	12.7
4. Provide student teaching experience in disadvantaged areas	26	6.8

² James A. Johnson. Innovations in Student Teaching. Multi-State Teacher Education Project, Monograph IV, Baltimore, Maryland, Oct. 1968.

<u>Innovation</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>Percent</u>
5. Employ a student teaching center concept	25	6.5
6. Place student teachers in team teaching and/or a non-graded situation	24	6.2
7. Employ an internship concept	24	6.2
8. Provide micro-teaching experiences	22	5.7
9. Utilize a block program concept	21	5.5
10. Have special requirements of or arrangements with cooperating teachers	19	4.9
11. Conduct seminars for student teachers	18	4.6
12. Provide student teaching experiences in a variety of different situations	14	3.6
13. Require student teachers to take part in a September experience	13	3.3
14. Use the inter-action analysis with student teachers	12	3.0
15. Provide full-time student teaching experience	10	2.5

So that the full spectrum of the innovations reported can be observed, the 88 additional innovations reported have been classified into 23 groups and placed in a decreasing order of frequency. In the list that follows, the first was reported as an innovation by 8 colleges and universities and the last by only 1.

Utilize subject matter specialists as college supervisors; Provide joint responsibility for student teaching with a public school system; Employ a clinical professor concept; Provide student teaching methods courses concurrently; Employ a teacher aide concept; Utilize resident coordinators; Individualize student teaching

experiences; Use simulation experiences in the program of professional laboratory experiences; Require student teaching during the junior year; Do not use an ABC grading system for student teachers; Use team supervision; Provide for a student teaching advisory council; Provide for student teaching in other nations; Place 2 student teachers in the same classroom at the same time; Use audiotaping equipment with student teachers; Employ a combination full-time/part-time student teaching assignment; Assign student teachers off-campus; Provide outdoor educational professional laboratory experiences; Employ a teaching practicum concept; Employ an apprentice teaching concept; Require student teachers to keep a daily log; Employ group process principles; Have an Honors Program for student teachers.

Such a multiplicity of suggestions cries out for additional classification lest we lose sight of the forest because of the trees. Accordingly, all 475 suggestions have been grouped into 6 divisions, which, unfortunately, are not mutually exclusive; but, they are sufficiently discrete to indicate differences. The results are reported below.

<u>Classification</u>	<u>Total Number</u>
1. A professional semester and internship	118
2. Wider and more varied experiences	110
3. Use of technological aids, TV, audio, etc.	84
4. More competent supervision of student teachers	77
5. More teaching experiences before student teaching	68
6. More adequate evaluation of performance	18

There are, of course, additional innovative programs that have been reported in educational literature. Edelfelt has described 29 of them in considerable detail.³ He has classified these into 9 categories which he has identified as follows: a State plan; New position developed; Interinstitutional cooperation; Integrated professional program; Individualization of experience; Cross-cultural experience; Technology; Sensitivity training; and Analysis of teaching. Of these 29 programs, as nearly as I have been able to determine, no more than half were among the schools included in Johnson's study. Edelfelt's report adds not only a number of colleges and universities to the total list but also the innovative programs developed by two regional laboratories, the Far West Laboratory in Berkeley and the Upper-Midwest Regional Educational Laboratory in Minneapolis.

The greatest agreement among these 29 programs favors the establishment of an integrated professional program and interinstitutional cooperation. The importance of technology is not stressed as much as it was in Johnson's report, but the stress upon sensitivity training and analysis of teaching is somewhat greater among Edelfelt's 29 institutions than among Johnson's 385.

As one wades through the professional literature on the subject of innovations in preservice teacher education programs, there is much that repeats the foregoing. Even

³ Roy A. Edelfelt, Editor. Innovative Programs in Student Teaching. Maryland State Department of Education, Baltimore, 1968.

so, there are several programs which may interest specialists in English Education particularly because they are recent and are specifically geared to the teacher of English.

The program at the University of Georgia need not be described here in great detail because a fine explanation of it appears in a recent issue of English Education.⁴ Nevertheless, one can not help but notice that many of the innovations already mentioned have been skillfully incorporated into it. Of particular value to us is the description of the attempts made to measure objectively what this program accomplishes.

An innovation which has been mentioned but may need more emphasis is the Teacher Center concept. While Bell and Peightel have written in some detail about this concept especially as it applies to inservice education, it is clear that it embraces preservice teacher education as well.⁵ They identify 9 teacher centers located in various parts of the United States and briefly describe what each does. In addition, they describe the British Teacher Center which gives a new dimension to our understanding of this concept. It is clear that here is a

⁴W. Geiger Ellis, W. Hugh Agee, Emily B. Gregory, Dan Kirly, Angelia Moore, Roy C. O'Donnell, Amy Pace, Wm. L. Smith, and L. Ramon Veal. "The University of Georgia Teacher Education Program in English." English Education, 7 (Summer 1976) 218-35.

⁵Harry Bell and John Peightel. Teacher Centers and Inservice Education. Fastback 71. Phi Delta Kappa Educational Foundation, Bloomington, Indiana, 1976.

place where both preservice and inservice teachers as well as supervisors, administrators, university faculty, paraprofessionals, students, parents, and others can work together in a field-based situation. Theresa Love has described for us an interesting field-based program for English teachers at Southern Illinois University which incorporates many of the innovations already mentioned.⁶

Always of interest is the educational program which is chosen each year by the American Association of Colleges of Teacher Education for its Distinguished Achievement Award. Western Illinois University at Macomb has just been announced as the 1977 winner.⁷ Features of the program are that it is a joint effort of correctional institutions, alternative schools, and university professionals. It is a field-based program which begins in the freshman and continues through the sophomore year as students visit institutions, is followed by spending 100 hours there in half-day blocks during the junior year, and concludes with an apprentice student teaching situation as the culminating field experience.

Even though all of these innovative practices reported may be labeled recent in that they are products of our present decade, several questions always arise whenever one surveys current literature. There is not only the fear of leaving something out, which we all know is inevitable,

⁶Theresa R. Love. "The English Teacher and the Teaching Learning Center." English Education, 7(Summer 1976) 236-44.

⁷"Western Illinois Correctional/Alternative Education Program Wins DAA." AACTE Bulletin, 29 (February 1977) 2.

but also the likelihood of a lag between publication and practice. It is unfortunate that failure is seldom publicized, for, aren't we also interested in what doesn't work? Finally, if one were to dream a little and create a program, a brain child as it were, what kind of program would then emerge?

In order to answer these three questions a questionnaire was circulated among 30 practicing professionals in English Education in 25 states. They were asked to respond to three open-ended questions concerning a successful practice or activity that had been added to their teacher education program since 1970, a practice or activity that had failed, and an innovative idea that they would like to try. Thus far replies have been received from over two-thirds of the group, representing schools from 20 states in all parts of the country.

Two practices that were reported as being successful among several of the respondents were scheduling field-experience activities for students during the methods course, and videotaping lessons taught by methods students and then playing them back for study and analysis. Among other successful innovations mentioned were inviting a panel of experienced teachers to the methods class to discuss student teaching; providing more than one student teaching assignment, which in one school made student teaching a two-semester program and in another required students to teach in both a junior and a senior high school; teaching the methods course in a series of modules

each of which contained a learning and activity package; making an identification of teacher behaviors for the English classroom and then asking the students to simulate them in a teaching situation; providing a "buddy" system of checking each other's written papers prepared for the methods class as an experience in evaluating writing; using many sources for reading in the methods class rather than using a single text; using improvisational drama in the presentation of material; providing more than one methods course, such as special courses in teaching reading, another in literature for adolescents, and a third in linguistics for teachers, which, by the way, was not the traditional course in linguistics usually offered; making student teaching a full-time experience with no on-campus responsibilities; bringing prospective teachers from other disciplines into the course on the teaching of writing; providing not one but two courses in reading for all prospective English teachers; providing actual experience in the methods class in activities such as how to divide students into groups; providing for methods and student teaching together during the same semester; and, stressing and practicing role playing during lessons taught by one's peers to increase a student teacher's sensitivity.

And what were some of the practices and activities that were reported as unsuccessful innovations? Among them were the following: compressing the methods course

into a six-weeks comprehensive course just before student teaching; completely individualizing the program in subjects preparatory to student teaching; teaching the methods course at the same time that student teaching is done; recording in a journal attitudes toward classroom activities observed, field experiences, readings, reflections, etc.; providing for joint participation of members of the English Department and English Education specialists in all phases of the program; providing for role playing by the students as junior and senior high school youth; developing an interinstitutional program among three colleges whose students took the same methods class and did student teaching in the same school system; scheduling student teaching in an evening school; team teaching of specialists in English, reading, and educational psychology; suggesting to student teachers the importance of taking part in professional activities and organizations; having the students in methods class individually develop a grammar test and then have them take these tests; and, scheduling several student teachers with one cooperating teacher. .

The ideas which the respondents indicated as something they would like to try were not as numerous. Among those described were the following: bringing a panel of high school students to the methods class to discuss teaching with the methods class; schedule the methods class in a

high school and thus provide team teaching and tutoring experiences during the methods semester; provide a new approach to the methods course through a "Language and Communication" approach in which searching questions would be provided and students would try to find answers to them; make the methods course a creative problem-solving experience in which problems the students want to explore are identified and then studied in an attempt to solve them.

And where has all of this brought us? Certainly there has been no shortage of innovations as we have examined what has been reported in printed form as well as the comments from our colleagues who have shared their first-hand experiences. Reporting innovative ideas that have failed has probably been one of the most intriguing parts of this study. It is interesting to note that what one school has reported as a success someone else has recorded as a failure. We have also noted that in most situations innovations don't appear singly, for they are often sufficiently complicated so that one innovation requires others to accompany it. Plans also vary considerably from school to school, for different combinations seem to be needed to care for different settings. It is this infinite variety which seems to reflect the strength of different teacher education programs. This may signal the warning that taking the plan of another school and trying to apply it in our own setting may not achieve the rosy

results hoped for.

Our task now seems to be one of bringing some type of order out of these many ideas that have been gathered. There are any general principles for action for us, the following seem to include the majority of the innovations suggested.

1. There seems to be a definite trend toward a longer and therefore a kind of developmental program, embracing at least a two-year preservice program as the minimum, in which a sequence of allied courses accompanies actual experiences in working in teaching situations. Some suggest increasing the length by including the freshman and sophomore years of college, while others suggest adding a year more to the traditional four-year college program. No doubt there already are those who would settle for nothing less than a five-year program with each year including some work directly related to preservice teacher education.

2. There is strong support for full-time teaching experience at the end of the program either in the form of apprentice teaching, an internship, or a full-semester block in which the student has no on-campus responsibilities. The idea here is to provide an experience for the student which is as close to a full day of teaching as possible.

3. The importance of a field-based teaching and learning experience is supported by many, especially those who believe strongly in the teacher-center idea. Some would confine this to the student teaching experience

while others insist that course work can be a part of field-based experiences, for it would be doing for the preservice program what is already a part of many inservice programs.

4. All of the foregoing implies the importance of the principle of wide experience. This would stress the importance that secondary teachers work with junior as well as high school youth, with schools in the inner city as well as the suburbs, and with starting student teaching when school opens in the fall and ending it when school closes in the spring.

5. The importance of competent supervision throughout is stressed in most innovative programs. This means not only competent cooperating teachers in the schools to which students are assigned but also better supervision from the teacher education institution. More time will have to be spent by college teachers in the field both for supervision of student teaching and in teaching classes that are directly related to methods of teaching each of the language arts. To this we ought to append the concept that the adjunct responsibility of competent teaching needs to be extended to all college teachers, for many students get wrong ideas of the teaching process through exposure to college professors who have not the

slightest idea of what teaching in the public schools should and should not be.

6. Certainly technology has entered the picture and to many the opportunity to videotape sample lessons and

critique them is the best thing that has happened to the preservice program. Here one sees many variations from the simple mini-lesson on "How to ask questions" to the more complete lesson which involves the building of readiness, the teaching of one or more concepts followed by evaluation, review, and the giving of an assignment. There are many variations here even including the videotaping of complete lessons during the student teaching period.

7. Finally, there is one principle that seems to be lacking in many of the innovative programs reported, and, if we are to be honest we should report limitations as well as strengths. The principle of evaluation is conspicuously absent in many programs. One gets the feeling from some that the program offered is so good that merit is taken for granted. Others seem to feel that you can't evaluate such things anyway, so what bother? The anti-accountability enthusiasts are not likely to respond kindly to any kind of evaluation except, possibly, their own assessment. It is true that we don't have precise instruments to evaluate many aspects of the teaching-learning process; but, this is no reason for us to give up.

One of the great critics of American life and its institutions is no longer with us, but if George Bernard Shaw were here today he would have something to say to

those of us who are still dragging our feet. On one occasion he made the remark that the thing that was wrong with American education was that it was constantly putting the tacks where the carpet was six months ago. As we honestly report more of our failures, so we can learn from them, and evaluate our successes to prove that what we call successes are really successful, it just may be that we might even satisfy the George Bernard Shaws by bringing the tacks and the carpet closer together.

Let us pause now and consider the metaphor that we started with at the beginning. There is obviously no shortage of new wine that is available in the market of ideas, and it comes in an almost infinite number of varieties. But, before we add any more new wine to the old bottle, we better be sure that it is good.